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A-255
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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO : Ecuadorean Desk, BOGOTA, GUAYAQUIL, LIMA (2),
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RS/AN
ANALYSIS BRANCH

DATE: January 15, 1967

FROM : Amembassy QUITO

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 2

REF : Guayaquil Weekly Summary No. 2

POLITICAL

1. Constituent Assembly Takes Important Decisions
2. U.S. Fishing Vessels Detained
3. Tension Along the Border
4. President Continues Vigorous Pace
5. University Election Battles
6. GOE Has Financial Difficulties
7. Foreign Affairs

LABOR

8. CEOSL Internal Battle Continues

MILITARY

9. Armed Forces Present New Year's Greetings to Constituent Assembly

ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

10. Finance Minister Asks Withdrawal of U.S. Consultants

Group 3

(Downgraded at 12-year intervals,
not automatically declassified)

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QUITO A-255

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POLITICAL

1. Constituent Assembly Takes Important Decisions.

The Assembly reached decisions on a number of highly controversial issues this week. On January 9 it denied, 42 votes to 20, a Conservative motion to give the vote to illiterates. The center-left charged that the motion was a rightist "electoral maneuver" since the votes of Ecuador's largely illiterate campesino population would be controlled by the conservative priests and hacienda owners who have traditionally ruled the countryside. The Assembly decided that citizenship rights, including the vote, would continue to be accorded only to those Ecuadoreans who have reached the age of 18 and know how to read and write. (UNCLASSIFIED)

On January 10 the Assembly voted 31 to 30 to hold popular elections for provincial and municipal councils on April 2, 1967. It is currently debating a number of issues relating to the elections, inter alia, which electoral and municipal laws will apply, whether mayors will be elected directly, and whether Assembly deputies can run for office. (UNCLASSIFIED)

On January 11 the Assembly "solved" the thorny border dispute between the provinces of Pichincha and Manabí by awarding the disputed area of El Carmen to Manabí and upgrading both El Carmen and Santo Domingo de los Colorados to cantons (municipalities). This decision was quickly protested by many residents of El Carmen as well as by the Provincial Council of Pichincha (Embtel 2973). Both Manabí and Pichincha have been threatening provincial civic strikes against an unfavorable decision by the Assembly. (UNCLASSIFIED)

The Agriculture Minister was interpellated this week on the agrarian reform problem (Week 1). He declared that the GOE did favor agrarian reform but wanted to eliminate defects in the program which had "caused a considerable increase in minifundia." Other events in the Assembly this week included a proposal for a nationwide drive against illiteracy; the initiation of a study to "solve" the banana crisis; a call by Carlos Julio AROSEMENA to make public all the Military Junta's "secret" laws; and a decision to have a committee make a detailed review of the Central Bank's activities over the past 10 years. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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